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Good afternoon Chairman Bishop and other members of the House Committee on Natural Resources. My name is Jeff Hanke. I'm a professional educator in the Duchesne County School District over the past twenty-five years. Thousands of former and current students just call me "coach". I speak for myself, the administration, faculty, staff, and students of Union High School in welcoming you to our new campus.

More than half a century ago Union High School was born with the joining of educational ideals and goals from patrons of Uintah and Duchesne Counties. The original campus was built straddling the jurisdictional boundary between the two counties. Today, we gather in the new Union High School, a facility that our community has dedicated years of patience and planning to bring us to this moment. The ideals that started several generations ago and are personified by our "UC" logo bring together students from rich and diverse communities such as Pleasant Valley, Myton, Ioka, Hancock Cove, Cedar View, Neola, Roosevelt, Ballard, Whiterocks, Fort Duchesne, Gusher and Randlett. This aggregate collection of students makes Union High School unique in many ways. Commonality of living in an environment where the sky seems endless and seasonal changes signal natural beginnings and endings to each year make the geographical basin located between the peaks of the Uinta Mountains to our north and the Tavaputs Plateau to our south, home.

For centuries, subsistence for the lives of Uinta Basin residents has been dependent upon the resources of the natural environment. Mining and onshore energy natural resources found within the basin provide opportunities for employment and community sustainability. Energy discovery, extraction, and refining have played a key role in the growth of neighboring cities, towns and communities like Vernal, Altamont, Duchesne, and Tabiona. Each share increased growth and prosperity due to the fifty plus years of continuous expansion and development of the energy natural resources available.

Each community has also experienced a significant growth in public educational opportunities through growth in student numbers, increased and improved modern facilities, and a unique connection in which schools become a hub of community activities and events within their rural populations.

Because the public education of our nations new and next generation remains a fundamental goal, it remains a critical public service... not to be limited, under-valued, or ignored by any level or purpose of government.

Many western States, Utah included, are annually confronted with the distribution of limited funds towards their most precious resource, their children. The ownership and stewardship of large portions of federal lands within the jurisdiction of a State present challenges for State provided services such as public education. The tax-exempt status of federal lands within the boundaries of western States creates deficiencies in vital public funding, especially education, as compared to States with more taxable private land ownership. To offset loss of revenue, public policy (including The Mineral Leasing Act) establishes a shared distribution of tax and lease revenues between the federal government and States where mining and energy resources are recovered. Limitations or loss of these revenues further limit revenue sources that could be targeted towards public education.

Here within the Uinta Basin, the educational facilities and programs share a great relationship with the energy extraction industry. This partnership is evidenced by the facilities and programs made available to our students. Cooperation between energy industries and Utah State University Uintah Basin and Uintah Basin Technical College provide course offerings towards energy related careers and facilities to simulate job-ready skills needed by the energy industry. This cooperation is continued into our secondary schools which establish partnerships in developing and maintaining facilities made available to students during their regular academic day as well as the extra-curricular contributions for development of a well-rounded school experience. Student participation opportunities in dance, drama, service clubs, career exploration and

numerous athletic programs exist at their current levels because of the cooperation that exists between the energy industry and the local educational systems.

Public policy has and will impact the cooperation between the energy industry and education. Consistent and fair policy created with input from stakeholders will establish a consistent pattern and opportunity for the use of energy related natural resources and its connection with our rural based lifestyle.

This incredible educational facility we gather in today, our new Union High School, symbolizes the commitment between jurisdictions of government, the belief that communities become stronger when resources are shared, and cooperation between private industry and public interests. This is Uinta Basin cooperation that does benefit all.

I thank the Committee for this opportunity to share my thoughts and perspectives in the relationship between a vibrant energy industry and successful education opportunity for our rural community.

Thank you.